

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 5, 7-14, and 17-19 remain pending in this application. By this Amendment, Claims 1, 7 and 13 have been amended. Support for the amendments to Claims 1 and 13 is found, by way of non-limiting example, in the specification page 10, lines 16-21, page 15, lines 8-21, page 17, line 20 to page 18, line 4, and page 21, lines 8-21. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 5, 7-9, 11-14 and 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over LoBiondo et al. (U.S. 5,305,199, hereinafter “LoBiondo”) in view of Tami et al. (U.S. 2004/0059634 A1, hereinafter “Tami”); and Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over LoBiondo in view of Tami as applied to Claims 1 and 8 above, and further in view of Kobayashi et al. (U.S. 2004/0083260 A1, hereinafter “Kobayashi”).

LoBiondo is directed to a system that “[t]hrough remote interactive communications capabilities, the system can automatically or semi-automatically submit orders for supplies, receive information relating to estimated and/or delayed shipping dates, and update the status of the inventory on the basis of confirmed shipment or order receipt information.”¹ In LoBiondo a “user interface module is connected by a suitable databus 19 for providing signals to and receiving signals from an inventory tracking system module 20 that tracks the inventory and reorder status of consumable supplies, such as marking materials in the form of toners or inks, and recording media, such as paper sheets.”² This is accomplished in

¹ Column 1, lines 46-52.

² Column 2, lines 38-44.

LoBiondo because “usage information can be derived relating to the number of sheets of each size of paper or the amount of toner or ink used in the predetermined time period.”³

LoBiondo has a remote communications capability⁴ “so that information to and from a remote supplies ordering location can be effected.”⁵ In LoBiondo “[e]xpected delivery and shipment information can be transmitted via link 27b to reprographic machine 10 and displayed on the UI 12 of reprographic machine 10 or another of the reprographic machines in the network 28.”⁶

Tami is directed to a system in which “inventory management systems are interfaced with the store’s host computer.”⁷ In Tami:

hand-held units 58 are designed to read the bar code of stock items. The hand held units 58 are interfaced with an in-store Point of Sale (POS) system in the inventory management system discussed earlier to provide and display current inventory and pricing data on each stock item bar code that it reads.⁸

In Tami, “a database of in-store-inventory can be analyzed for generating computer assisted re-stocking orders, or be analyzed for customer purchasing preferences in a given geographic location.”⁹

Therefore in Tami:

the POS system 108 is integrated with the inventory management system 114, to capture and track all inventory received and shipments against invoice, as well as quantity ordered vs. quantity received. In the preferred embodiment, the method of the present invention allows for automatic stock replenishment based on POS scan data with re-order points configurable in the inventory file.¹⁰

³ Column 2, lines 62-65.

⁴ Column 3, line 17.

⁵ Column 3, lines 18-20.

⁶ Column 3, lines 42-46.

⁷ Paragraph [0012].

⁸ Paragraph [0054].

⁹ Paragraph [0061].

¹⁰ Paragraph [0077].

Neither LoBiondo nor Tami describes a mail box that provides a storage area for each user who user the image forming apparatus as recited in Claims 1 and 13. Nor do LoBiondo or Tami describe an advertisement generator that generates advertisement information for each user based on past order history and stores the advertisement information in the storage area for each user as recited in Claims 1 and 13. In addition, neither LoBiondo nor Tami describes a display for displaying advertisement information of a specific user identified by the image forming apparatus as recited in Claims 1 and 13. Finally, neither LoBiondo nor Tami describes an office supply information server that displays the warning relating to the remaining amount only for a specific user identified by the image forming apparatus as recited in Claims 1 and 13. That is, neither LoBiondo nor Tami, nor the combination thereof, describes or renders obvious Claims 1 and 13 as amended herein.

Kobayashi fails to correct the deficiencies of LoBiondo and Tami because Kobayashi neither describes nor renders obvious the features of Claims 1 and 13 described above.

It is respectfully submitted that Claims 5, 7-12, 14 and 17-19 are patentable at least for the reasons argued above with regard to the claims from which they depend.

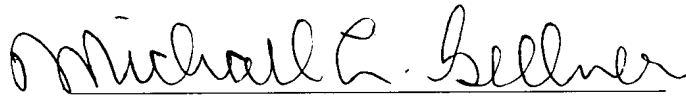
Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of Claims 1, 5, 7-14 and 17-19 be reconsidered and withdrawn, and that Claims 1, 5, 7-14 and 17-19 be passed to allowance.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michael L. Gellner", written in black ink over a horizontal line.

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